

HOLODOMOR IN UKRAINE

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, tomorrow, we are going to be addressed by the head of state from Ukraine.

I have been talking to people—young people, students, older people—about if they know the background between those countries, specifically the Holodomor, a starvation of the Ukrainian people that took place in 1932 and 1933.

I am shocked. I bet less than 10 percent of Americans know that 4 million—4 to 15 million, but at least 4 million—Ukrainians were starved to death by the Communist government in the early 1930s.

Even less, I am sure, know that for misreporting this starvation, a guy by the name of Walter Duranty, from The New York Times, received a Pulitzer Prize for covering it up. So, this left-wing bias out of The New York Times is not something that started today. They, of course, hated the people who were starved because they were independent farmers, and the Communist Party hates independent, family-oriented people.

UNLOCKING RURAL AMERICA'S POTENTIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MANNING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I hope it is clear to all of my colleagues in this body that rural America faces a myriad of challenges.

Every day, members of the Congressional Western Caucus, of which I am very honored to be chairman, and many partners throughout rural America are working to ensure that local communities across the country are heard in our Nation's Capitol, right here, and that these challenges do not go unaddressed.

For many in big cities and urban areas, I think it can be pretty easy to overlook our rural communities. But we truly are the backbone of our great country, and our challenges are not our challenges alone. Rather, they are reflective of the entire Nation's challenges, things like managing public lands and fulfilling the government's multipurpose-use doctrine, or sup-

porting local economies and encouraging economic development, promoting critical infrastructure like roads and bridges and dams, ensuring a strong agricultural industry that feeds the world, and empowering the communities that we represent to embrace expanded domestic energy production and clean energy technologies.

Our State, local, and private land managers are conservation partners. Small businesses and local communities are eager to take the reins and make the improvements that we need, but they are consistently held back by bureaucratic red tape, delayed permitting processes that add years and millions of dollars in cost to projects, and outdated laws that don't take into account the best available science of modern technologies.

Over and over again, I hear from my constituents in central Washington State, and also from community leaders from across the United States, that we need to get the Federal Government out of the way.

That is why, throughout this month of March, Congressional Western Caucus members are taking the opportunity to highlight why reforming our duplicative and burdensome permitting process is the key to unlocking rural America's potential.

Madam Speaker, broken permitting systems negatively impact the progress that we could be making at nearly every step of the way. The National Environmental Policy Act, or what many refer to as NEPA, is one of the most egregious examples of a well-intentioned law turned into a bureaucratic nightmare for those of us who are working to improve the communities where we live, work, and farm.

The Endangered Species Act is another. This landmark species protection law has become outdated, and it is now used as a weapon by serial litigators and misguided environmentalists, who want nothing more than to sue and settle, wasting our limited government resources, which are stalling projects across the United States and disincentivizing investment in rural America.

Both of these laws play an important role in protecting lands, waters, and wildlife that we cherish throughout the West and across rural America. But because Congress has not been able to meaningfully reform them, they have actually begun to work against us.

ESA regulations can add decades to the permitting processes for forest management projects or projects that would help prevent catastrophic wildfires across the West.

In my own home State of Washington, and across the Pacific Northwest, the policies surrounding the northern spotted owl wreaked havoc on our forest industry, destroying—literally destroying—local economies. Now, our region experiences some of the worst wildfires in our Nation's history.

Madam Speaker, that is not a coincidence. Delays and roadblocks, and I in-

tend to insert a pun there, Madam Speaker, that are caused by NEPA regulations have slowed or completely stopped infrastructure projects like highway improvements or installation of new hydropower technologies that generate clean energy and provide increased fish passage.

Just last week, our members met with former Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, who worked within the Trump administration to streamline inefficiencies and cut the environmental review process from 4.5 years, if you can believe that, down to no more than 2.

The Biden administration, of course, is now reversing this progress and bending to politically motivated interest groups at the expense of rural communities.

It is clear to us in the Western Caucus that it is time for Congress to act. For decades, rural America has been kept in regulatory limbo at the mercy of each changing administration.

Congress is a coequal branch of government, and we need to, we should, assert our authority to ensure that our communities have the certainty that they need to move forward on these critical projects.

Our rural communities deserve the investment and the development that is disincentivized by our broken permitting processes.

I know we have Western Caucus members here today who will help shed some light on some of these examples in their home districts, in their States. We will continue to demonstrate the harmful impacts of the status quo and outline our vision for a future that empowers rural Americans to tackle our challenges head-on.

I am very happy to have a group of colleagues here who are very interested in this topic, and I will first turn to Mr. BRUCE WESTERMAN, who is the vice chair of the Western Caucus, one of my vice chairs, but also the ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee.

I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

□ 1945

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and also for his leadership in the Western Caucus and on these important issues that mean a lot to places like the Fourth District of Arkansas, to all over rural America, where out-of-touch policies in D.C. have a negative impact on people's daily lives, and just being able to earn a living, to pay their taxes, and to provide the goods and services that the rest of the world needs. So I appreciate you hosting this Special Order.

For years, it has been clear to rural America that our Federal permitting and environmental review processes are broken. While well-intentioned, they are doing more harm than good. The current system is complex, burdensome, and ineffective, yet the political

elite in Washington, D.C., wonder why our farmers, ranchers, and energy producers struggle.

Far-left special interest groups have weaponized, as Mr. NEWHOUSE said, well-intentioned laws like the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act, and they use them as clubs to bludgeon or kill critical infrastructure, natural resource management, and energy and minerals development projects across the United States.

Delays in environmental regulatory systems are especially acute. In 2020, the Council on Environmental Quality showed that the average time for a Federal agency to complete a final environmental impact statement through the NEPA process—again, Mr. NEWHOUSE quoted this number—is 4½ years. But that is the average number. One-quarter of all projects took over 6 years to complete. That is more than red tape. That is a roadblock. That is why Republicans support the BUILDER Act to streamline the NEPA process and benefit communities looking to improve infrastructure investment.

My district, like many others in the Western Caucus, is built on the agriculture industry, and I hear over and over from hardworking Arkansans who are simply trying to make a living through the sludge of government regulation. Overregulation and stalled regulation ensures that only the biggest businesses have the money and time to navigate the red tape and hire the lawyers that are needed to even attempt to navigate the process. This is the kind of Big Government that puts local, small operators out of business. It stamps out small business operators and honest competition in one fell swoop.

The message from rural America is clear: Government needs to get out of the way. More than that, government needs to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. I think government has forgotten that it is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, and that if you work for the government, you work for the people. It is not the other way around.

There is no doubt that we should be good stewards of our environment and communities, but too often the free market, unburdened by government, is seen as the enemy of both. This is simply false. Streamlining a permitting process shouldn't be partisan, political, or picking sides. It can be a win for the environment, the economy, and our communities simultaneously. We do not need to choose just one. In fact, a healthy environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. Somehow, we have gotten this idea that they are mutually exclusive, and we can't have one without the other.

Again, Republicans have the solutions to cutting the red tape—it is called the BUILDER Act—and by so doing, we can empower rural America and strengthen our Nation's economy at the same time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. WESTERMAN for his comments. It just goes to show that it is not just Washington State, but clear across the Nation in Arkansas as well.

To further prove that point, I would like to turn to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER), my good friend and colleague from the north-eastern part of the State, a place where I have had the privilege to visit and see the great things that are happening in the energy sector there.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me and for organizing this Special Order and all the great work that he does leading the Western Caucus.

We are really working on issues that impact not just rural America but all of America. And just to highlight a little bit of what is happening in Pennsylvania, currently in Pennsylvania, Pennsylvanians are paying on average \$4.42 per gallon of gas. That is \$1.39 more than they were paying a year ago.

The White House is frantically trying to spin a narrative that points to Russia's invasion of Ukraine as the catalyst for skyrocketing gas prices.

The truth is that the Biden administration set this energy crisis into motion on day one of his term in office by cutting American pipelines and halting leases for drilling on Federal lands. Blocking oil and natural gas drilling puts a stranglehold on domestic production and leads to higher prices for American families.

Not only has the Biden administration diminished American energy independence, but it also gave Russia the confidence to weaponize its energy exports. Pair this with Biden's refusal to unleash American energy dominance, and you have a United States, our United States that is dependent on tyrannical nations for energy.

American energy is right beneath our feet. We must kick production into high gear. We heard the President stand here and talk about buy American, made American. Well, we can't do that without American energy. We can't build American infrastructure without American energy.

To unleash that energy, the Biden administration needs to start listening to the people, needs to trust in the energy producers. We produce energy in the United States more cleanly than any other nation on the face of the Earth. We do it right, we do it environmentally friendly, and we do not want to enrich people who want to do harm to us or our allies. That is what we need to do.

We need expedited permits for LNG-exporting facilities. We need to get through the permitting process for drilling. We need to make sure we can drill on Federal lands. We need to make sure we complete pipelines. Those are the things that are halting American energy production, fueling inflation, and adding to the skyrocketing cost of energy for all Americans.

It is costing more to fill up our gas tanks. It is costing more to run our businesses and heat our homes. Simply, it is avoidable if the Biden administration would just reverse its policies and go back to where we were just 1½ short years ago, and that was energy independence. I look forward to working with Mr. NEWHOUSE on many things that can help make America stronger and put Americans first.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. KELLER for reminding us that these policies and decisions have impacts not just domestically but truly impact our relationships and our position of strength throughout the world, and especially in the situation we find ourselves in today.

Next, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS), a good friend and colleague, the ranking member on the Energy and Commerce Committee, someone I have served with for a long time, not only in the statehouse in Washington State but here in the people's House in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my good friend, DAN NEWHOUSE, chairman of the Western Caucus, for his great leadership for bringing us together tonight.

This is a pivotal moment in our Nation's history. We are witnessing the real dangers of undermining our independence because of a rush-to-green agenda and what it means for our national security, our geopolitical power, and our standard of living here in the United States of America.

Energy is foundational to everything that we do. Actions to shut down American energy disarms us, and it disarms our security. By boosting our domestic production of oil and natural gas, we could be helping our allies in Europe, standing with Ukraine, and countering Putin's war.

Shutting down American energy drives people into poverty. Energy prices here at home are surging. Gas prices are the most expensive in the United States' history, breaking the record that was set by the Obama administration in 2008. Filling up the gas tank now will cost a typical family an additional \$2,000 this year. This is not "Putin's price hike."

How did this happen? How did America get into this energy crisis? These are the facts:

Under President Biden, domestic oil production declined by more than 1.5 million barrels per day, while Russian imports to the United States reached an 11-year high.

President Biden canceled the Keystone XL pipeline and imposed a moratorium on energy development on Federal lands.

The administration is currently sitting on more than 4,500 permits to drill.

Regulatory uncertainty surrounding pipeline approvals have already led to the cancelation of at least four major

pipeline projects that could have served over 25 million homes.

The cancellations of these four pipelines restricted nearly 10 percent of our natural gas production. And other pipelines are under threat of closure, like Line 5, which is critical to those who live in Michigan and Ohio.

But what is the administration's solution to this self-made crisis? What they really want to do is ban all oil and force a faster transition to their radical agenda. The President is doubling down on the rush to wind, solar, and electric vehicles—he stated so in the State of the Union—while at the same time saying that he wants to make things in America.

In order to make things in America, we must cut the red tape for domestic mining, the processing of minerals that right now is nearly impossible in our Nation. China is controlling 80 percent of the critical minerals and materials needed to manufacture renewables and batteries. We can't trade American energy security, reliability, and affordability by rushing to green technologies that make us reliant on the Chinese Communist Party.

America is the number one energy producer in the world, and we should act like it, yet the actions we are taking right now are not helping. We could boost our domestic energy production. It is vital to our way of life, our security in bringing down energy prices.

This Congress should move the legislation that I introduced with my friend BRUCE WESTERMAN, who is the ranking Republican on the Natural Resources Committee. It is called the American Energy Independence from Russia Act.

It would immediately remove restrictions on U.S. LNG exports so that we could deliver natural gas to our allies in Europe rather than them continuing to be dependent on Russia. They get 40 percent of their natural gas from Russia.

It would restart the oil and gas leasing on Federal lands and offshore so that we could regain our energy dominance, our energy independence.

It would protect American energy and mineral development from unilateral shutdowns by the Biden administration just revoking permits.

And because we need more pipelines, pipelines that are the safest way to move product, we would approve the Keystone XL pipeline.

Second, the administration must stop delaying the permits and put Americans to work on energy infrastructure in America. Right now, it takes on average 6 or 7 years to review a project.

Third, we need to embrace innovation for abundant, affordable, and clean energy for us and the rest of the world. It means reducing the permitting and regulatory burdens around nuclear. We should be leading in advanced nuclear technology, for us here in the United States and around the world, but right now the permitting is so costly and time consuming, it is delaying our progress.

With an all-of-the-above strategy, we can say “yes” to America's global leadership and lower energy prices. I continue to urge my colleagues across the aisle to work together on this. Let's flip the switch on American energy to ensure a better life and a more secure future for all.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman very much for helping to bring home the impact this is going to have on Americans, on families, on people just trying to get to work every day and having to fill up their gas tanks. These policies have consequences, and we need to understand that.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. For sure. We need energy to do everything.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. We do absolutely.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. We need to be leading. It is American leadership; it is American competitiveness; it is our security. Let's do it.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS), one of our great Members who has truly been a champion in helping to reduce red tape and improve the regulatory picture for people throughout this country.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding to me to speak on this important topic.

Most Americans can agree that the Federal Government is very good at creating regulations and making what should often be a simple process extremely complicated. In recent years, Federal permitting regulations have been some of the most overbearing and burdensome of regulations.

Landmark environmental protection laws, like the National Environmental Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act have become outdated and grown far too expansive. It is now nearly impossible to secure permits in a timely, efficient, and reasonable manner. From energy and mining projects to infrastructure development and forest management, burdensome and duplicative permitting processes have slowed or halted development throughout rural America.

Iowans are all too familiar with the overregulated government permitting process. One such example is the cumbersome and unworkable 2015 waters of the United States rule, also known as WOTUS.

□ 2000

Under the 2015 definition, the Federal government was given the authority to regulate almost any waters, including streams, ditches, ponds, and creeks.

In fact, the Federal Government would have the authority to regulate water on 97 percent of the land in Iowa. Let me repeat that: 97 percent of the land in Iowa. This left farmers, ranchers, landowners, and businesses to face confusion and burdensome restrictions on how to use their own property. WOTUS drastically expanded the jurisdiction over bodies of water like

streams and ponds that the Clean Water Act never intended to regulate.

Instead of burdening private citizens with confusing and ambiguous standards that could end up costing them thousands of dollars, we should work to ensure that the Federal Government's clean water efforts are focused on clearly defined bodies of water.

WOTUS hurt American farmers, ranchers, landowners, and businesses, it caused confusion, and it hindered economic development.

To help rural America, the Trump administration issued the 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule, also known as NWPR. The NWPR is much more workable and keeps our water and land clean without destroying businesses in the process.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration is taking steps to revoke the 2020 NWPR and return to the 2015 WOTUS rule. Reverting back to terrible policies such as the WOTUS rule would have an extreme Federal overreach and would significantly harm small businesses and cripple our country's economic recovery.

The Trump administration also took steps to streamline processes under the National Environmental Protection Act to improve the ability for individuals and businesses to build, improve, and maintain infrastructure by facilitating more efficient, effective, and timely NEPA reviews by Federal agencies.

With our economy on the mend, the Biden administration should not be considering unnecessary and overly burdensome government regulations.

Reverting back to these policies represents a blatant, unconstitutional power grab aimed at taking Federal control over States in a way that threatens the rights of farmers, ranchers, and all other landowners in Iowa and across our great Nation. We need to let people do their jobs and cut back on the incredible number of Federal regulations in the permitting process.

We can protect our Nation's waterways and make improvements to infrastructure without burdensome regulations. In Iowa and in rural communities throughout the country, we recognize that farmers and ranchers are the original conservationists, and that bureaucratic red tape does not help us grow, prosper, protect our water and our land.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's work on WOTUS and the navigable waters issue. I think I have heard her say something like those things, WOTUS, is truly the most—the worst regulatory overreach in our Nation's history and it is something we have to stop. I thank the gentlewoman for her work on that.

I would like to go just a little bit south from the State of Washington to another State that adjoins my State, and the good gentleman from Oregon, in his first term in Congress, but just doing an excellent job; and I am just delighted to have him as part of this effort.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Madam Speaker, outdated and complicated permitting processes, excess paperwork, environmental impact statements, and years-long litigation processes have delayed or prevented projects all across Oregon, especially in my district, which covers more than two-thirds of the State.

Federal permitting involves too many agencies and too many bureaucrats. As far as Federal agencies are concerned, there are no consequences for time lost or money spent. Nowhere is this problem more pronounced than in forest management.

For decades, Congress has stacked process upon process, creating more and more red tape for agencies to deal with. Of course we want to know what the impact of a project will be. However, when the processes of determining that impact stall action for up to 20 years, the system is obviously broken.

With over 70 million acres of our national forest at high or moderate risk of wildfire, there is an urgent need to reduce the amount of unneeded and dangerous fuel. We have seen the tragic results of inaction as millions of acres of our beautiful forests burn each year, including over 10 million acres in 2020 alone and over 7 million acres in 2021.

In my home State of Oregon, over a million acres burned last year in the Labor Day fires. Last summer, smoke from the massive Oregon Bootleg Fire spread across the entire United States, visibly fouling the air and poisoning people even here in Washington, D.C.

The Biden administration issued a 10-year plan acknowledging the wildfire and forest health crisis and calling for treatment of an additional 20 million acres of the National Forest System, a fraction of what is actually necessary. Congress recently provided the Forest Service with over \$6 billion in the bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Act to increase hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration activities. The agency, however, remains buried in red tape, endless analysis, and frivolous litigation.

A 2014 GAO report found that the United States Forest Service did more of the most costly and time-consuming NEPA reviews than any other Federal agency. These National Environmental Policy Act reviews often require the Forest Service to spend over \$1 million to complete paperwork, and then they take an average of almost 5 years to merely authorize small and inconsequential forest thinning projects intended to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire to our forests and communities.

While precious time is wasted, massive wildfires rage on, dumping billions of tons of toxic, cancer-causing pollution into our air. This is an environmental disaster rapidly becoming a nightmare.

Congress must take action to give the Forest Service additional tools to

reduce the time, cost, and litigation that delay the agency from authorizing and implementing these critical projects. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Resilient Federal Forests Act, which would do just that.

Earlier this year, I expressed my concern on this very floor about the so-called River Democracy Act currently pending in the Senate. It would place new management restrictions on some 3 million acres of Federal land in Oregon by establishing a 1-mile wild and scenic buffer along some 4,700 miles of creeks and, in some areas, dry gulches.

The Forest Service recently reported that over half of the 2 million Forest Service acres of land impacted by this act is at high risk for wildfire. Treating these acres only becomes more difficult, if not impossible, with these types of designations.

It is time to overhaul our Nation's permitting and NEPA process. Current laws and agency rules hand far too much power to litigation groups that use sue and settle tactics to profit off our tax dollars by delaying and, in some cases, preventing important restoration projects.

We need serious, thoughtful reform to put an end to this abuse. I am glad my colleagues share my determination to make that happen, and hopefully it will be a bipartisan process.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for focusing on a very important issue for us in the West. Every summer we hear the West is burning. We have got to change our policies in order to prevent the loss of property, loss of life, the detriment to our environment.

I would like to turn the floor over now to someone who is—you know, we are the Western Caucus, right? But we have members from all over the country. And one of our members represents almost the furthest east in our caucus. The good gentleman from the great State of Georgia.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Georgia and the beautiful community of Savannah (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, President Biden wants to build back better. What he doesn't realize is that first, we must be able to build. Many otherwise shovel-ready infrastructure projects get trapped in bureaucratic gridlock for years.

Developers routinely find themselves navigating environmental reviews that require up to over 60 authorizations from as many as 13 different Federal agencies.

Projects starting today with new funding from the infrastructure deal won't be realized for 5 to 7 years, if not longer. After years of project design, engineering, planning, and financing, the 2 to 4-year permitting process commences. This pushes orders for new windmills, solar panels, transmission lines, charging stations, construction

equipment, steel, concrete, labor contracts, and whatever else a project may need years into the future. Only after all of that can the 2 to 3 years of construction begin.

The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council analyzed 69 major projects and found that bureaucratic delays cost developers \$100 billion.

New wind and solar projects take 2.3 years, on average, to receive Federal permits; 3.3 years for electricity transmission projects, and 4.7 years for major new road projects.

This contrast with the ambitious and radical climate goals Democrats have set, calling for a 50 percent reduction in emissions by 2030. In that case, a 7 to 10-year development timeline is entirely too long or realistic.

Permitting challenges have resulted in extended delays and creating a chilling effect on new infrastructure investment. This isn't just a sacrifice of time. Perhaps worse, it costs money, a lot of money.

Twenty to 30 percent of total project funding is wasted on unnecessary red tape. We are wasting millions of dollars a year by just waiting. Instead of fixing that well-known issue, Democrats chose to throw more money at the problem. Now we see how this has brought on record inflation.

Sadly, the cost of these unnecessary delays is ultimately passed down to taxpayers, either through taxes, tolls, or increased rates in usage fees. It is no wonder that the U.S.' infrastructure is falling behind other developed nations.

What is curious is, why did Biden's so-called infrastructure bill do nothing to speed up the process, and, instead, doubled down on delays and bureaucracy?

Republicans and Democrats alike are struggling to build around these roadblocks, and it is high time Congress did something about it.

I thank the gentleman again for yielding.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for helping illustrate the impact that this has on local communities, the costs, not only in dollars, of the long permitting process, but the delay to communities for these much-needed projects.

Now, this could probably come under saving the best for last. The great Representative from the great State of California, I would like to say is was one of the premier members of the new freshman class. I appreciate Mr. VALADAO, a fellow farmer, a fellow West Coaster, being here being part of this Special Order to talk about some very important issues here.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. I appreciate the opportunity. Mr. NEWHOUSE has done an amazing job leading the Western Caucus and fighting for the things that affect some of us across the country.

You just heard of one of our colleagues from all the way on the East

Coast talk about some of the issues. It always amazes me that our issues are so aligned.

But specifically today I am going to talk a little bit about water. So in communities like the Central Valley, Federal permitting requirements, coupled with the State's strict environmental regulations make it harder for our communities to get the water they so desperately need.

Increasing water storage capacity is critical to ensuring a reliable water supply for our valley farmers that feed the country. Unfortunately, our broken permitting process prevents many of these critical water infrastructure projects from ever getting off the ground.

We need to fix complex and contradictory laws, court decisions, and regulations at the State and Federal levels that hinder our water storage infrastructure.

Layers of unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape in permitting decisions have blocked much of the needed progress on a long list of projects, from water storage, to energy production, to highways.

The government red tape in permitting is not only affecting water storage, it is also having a devastating effect on our Nation's energy supply.

There is a backlog of over 4,600 permits to drill pending under the Biden administration, and even though Federal law requires approval of the permits on Federal lands within 30 days, permits often languish at the Department of the Interior for a year or more.

This government red tape is hurting families in the Central Valley and across the country in the form of higher gas prices. It is time for the government bureaucracy to get out of the way so we can once again become energy independent.

There is no reason that streamlining the Federal permitting process should be a controversial issue. Rural communities like the one I represent are tired of burdensome government regulations holding them back. Greater efficiency in the Federal permitting process is critical for getting water to those in the Central Valley that need it most.

And as we saw, from other colleagues that spoke before us, this isn't just a California issue. And I know that the chairman here, Mr. NEWHOUSE and I, our districts are a lot alike. We both grow a lot of different commodities, and we are proud of our districts. But we both need something that makes it all possible, and that is water and energy.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership on these important issues and thank him for giving me the opportunity.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, the gentleman is right. What is more precious than water? And those of us in the West understand that very well.

So, Madam Speaker, let me just say I am very grateful to have colleagues from across this great country join me

tonight to talk about these issues, and to discuss our efforts in the Western Caucus as it relates to permitting month.

□ 2015

As you have heard, the broken processes surrounding permitting throughout the Federal Government have truly kneecapped our rural communities. This has slowed progress and has cost millions and millions of dollars.

In order to truly unleash American potential, we have to reform this process, and we will. Between the Western Caucus and those of us in Congress, we will continue to advocate for common-sense policies that are going to do just that.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for the Special Order opportunity this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker pro tempore, Ms. DEGETTE, on Friday, March 11, 2022:

H.R. 2545. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the role of doctors of podiatric medicine in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Kevin F. McCumber, Deputy Clerk of the House, further reported and found truly enrolled a joint resolution of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker pro tempore, Ms. DEGETTE, on Friday, March 11, 2022:

H.J. Res. 75. Joint Resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for other purposes.

Kevin F. McCumber, Deputy Clerk of the House, further reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker on Friday, March 11, 2022:

H.R. 2471. An act making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance for the situation in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(b) of House Resolution 188, the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning for morning-hour debate and noon for legislative business.

Thereupon (at 8 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF PAYGO LEGISLATION

Pursuant to the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO), Mr. YAR-

MUTH hereby submits, prior to the vote on passage, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, that H.R. 560, the Northern Mariana Islands Legal Residents Relief Act of 2021, as amended, would have no significant effect on the deficit, and therefore, the budgetary effects of such bill are estimated as zero.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-3609. A letter from the Director, Regulations Management Division, Rural Development Innovation Center, Rural Development-Rural Housing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program [Docket No.: RHS-20-SFH-0025] (RIN: 0575-AD21) received February 22, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-3610. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulation, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — HUD Office of Hearings and Appeals [Docket No.: FR-6285-F-01] received February 22, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-3611. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tobacco Products; Required Warnings for Cigarette Packages and Advertisements; Delayed Effective Date [Docket No.: FDA-2019-N-3065] (RIN: 0910-A139) received March 7, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3612. A letter from the Acting Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Stationary Combustion Turbines; Amendments [EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0688; FRL-5909.1-02-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AV03) received March 7, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3613. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluopyram; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2020-0607; FRL-9454-01-OCSP] received February 22, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3614. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; AK; Removal of Excess Emissions Provision [EPA-R10-OAR-2017-0031; FRL-9177-02-R10] received February 22, 2022, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-3615. A letter from the Associate Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Georgia: Approval of Revisions to State Implementation Plan; Correction [EPA-R04-OAR-